

Message Text

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PAGE 01 YAOUND 00732 021101Z

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EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CM, US, XJ

SUB: PROPOSAL OF CAMEROON VISIT DURING AFRICAN TRIP

REFS: (A) YAOUNDE 4314 (MODIS) (B) YAOUNDE A-99 DTD 10/30/75
(C) YAOUNDE 676 (D) YAOUNDE 579

1. I SUGGEST YOU CONSIDER INCLUSION OF CAMEROON AMONG OTHER OPTIONS IN YOUR PROPOSED AFRICAN TRIP. THE BENEFITS OF SUCH A VISIT WOULD BE MUTUAL. AHIDJO'S INFLUENCE AND PRESTIGE - ALREADY CONSIDERABLE DUE TO MANY FACTORS, NOT LEAST AMONG THEM HIS LONGEVITY AS A LEADER - WOULD BE FURTHER ENHANCED AND HIS RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT WOULD BE PERCEIVED AS RECEIVING AN IMPORTANT REWARD, BY CAMEROONIANS AND, EQUALLY IMPORTANT, OTHERS IN AFRICA WITH LESS RESPONSIBLE POLICIES. BENEFITS TO US WOULD INCLUDE DIRECT ACQUAINTANCE WITH AN EXPERIENCED, INTELLIGENT, SHREWD AFRICAN STATESMAN CAPABLE OF FAIRLY SOPHISTICATED CONCEPTUAL THINKING (E.G., HIS STATEMENT TO BILL SCHAUFLE: "TAKE BUT APARTHEID AWAY, AND THE RUSSIANS AND CUBANS HAVE NO MORE BUSINESS IN ANGOLA THAN THE SOUTH AFRICANS"). (REF. A).

2. AHIDJO HAS BEEN MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN OTHER LEADERS OF SO-CALLED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES I KNOW OF IN BUILDING UP DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS (REF B) SO SYSTEMATICALLY, THAT MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE PRETTY MUCH AS BEFORE IN CASE HE SHOULD BE REMOVED, BUT THIS EVENTUALITY IS MADE LESS LIKELY

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PAGE 02 YAOUND 00732 021101Z

THAN IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES BY VERY FACT OF THOROUGH INSTITU-

TIONALIZATION. SIMILARLY, HE HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO WEAVE CAMEROON INTO EXPANDING WEB OF INTRA-AFRICAN AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, IN DESIGN OF WHICH HE AND OTHER CAMEROONIANS ARE PLAYING A SIGNIFICANT ROLE; E.G., SECRETARY-GENERALSHIP OF OAU, PARTICIPATION IN CIEC, FORMER MEMBERSHIP IN UNSC.

3. SUBSTANTIVELY, GURC HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE ON ANGOLA, AT LEAST AS ACTIVE AND POSSIBLY MORE EFFECTIVE, BEHIND THE SCENES THAN MORE "PUBLIC" AFRICANS LIKE SENGHOR (REF C). CHOICE OF TIMING OF RECOGNITION OF MPLA WAS TYPICAL. AFTER STRONG EXERTIONS AGAINST MPLA AT ADDIS SUMMIT, GURC TOOK THIS STEP AFTER SIERRA LEONE HAD PROVIDED A SIMPLE MAJORITY OF OAU MEMBERS. IN ORDER TO SEEK TO EXERT MODERATING INFLUENCE BOTH ON MPLA AND OTHERS ALREADY ON BANDWAGON OR ABOUT TO JOIN IT. CAMEROON ALSO NATURALLY SEEKS TO PROTECT OWN INTERESTS AND IS WORRIED BY PROXIMITY OF CUBANS AND RUSSIANS TO ITS OWN TERRITORY AND ROLE OF AT LEAST ONE FORMER LEADER OF ANTI-AHIDJO INSURGENCY ON NETO'S STAFF.

4. AHIDJO AND HIS ADVISERS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT STEADINESS OF AMERICAN "ENGAGEMENT" IN AFRICA, KEENLY AWARE OF THEIR DEPENDENCE UPON US "SECURITY UMBRELLA" (FORMIN KEUTCHA'S TERM), AND APPREHENSIVE ABOUT WHAT MINISTER IN PRESIDENCY SENGAT KUO (REF D) CALLS "EXCESSES OF DEMOCRACY" IN US - I.E., CONGRESSIONAL VOTES ON ANGOLAN AID AND PRESS ATTACKS ON ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY. WE TRY TO REASSURE THEM, BUT NOTHING COULD BE BETTER DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE THAT END THAN PERSONAL ENCOUNTER BETWEEN YOURSELF AND AHIDJO.

5. GURC RECORD DURING LAST UNGA SESSION WAS 100 PERCENT WRONG, INCLUDING FOR FIRST TIME ON KOREAN ISSUE, ON WHICH CAMEROON, WHICH HAS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA, HAD PREVIOUSLY MAINTAINED NEUTRAL STANCE. THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT CAMEROON EXERTED ITSELF AGAINST EXPULSION OF ISRAEL AT BOTH OAU SUMMIT IN JUNE 1975 AND NON-ALIGNED GROUP'S MEETING IN LIMA IN AUGUST 1975. THEIR JUSTIFICATIONS OF KOREAN, ZIONISM, PUERTO RICO, AND VIRGIN ISLANDS VOTES WERE GENERALLY LAME - REFERRING TO OWN EXPERIENCE WITH STATIONING OF FOREIGN TROOPS, DICTIONARY DEFINITIONS OF ZIONISM AND RACISM, THEIR COMMITMENT TO SELF-DETERMINATION, AND WORKING ON THE INSIDE OF A CAUCUS AGAINST A POSITION BUT ACCEPTING THE CONSENSUAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE GROUP.

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PAGE 03 YAOUND 00732 021101Z

HOWEVER, THEIR VOTING HAS NOT REPEAT NOT BEEN MECHANICALLY ANTI-AMERICAN AND THEY UNDERSTAND ISSUE-SPECIFICITY, AND MAKE GOOD USE OF INTERDEPENDENCE CONCEPT. THEY NEVER GLOAT AT BEING IN MAJORITY. THEY ARE HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS OF SOVIETS AND EAGER TO DIVERSIFY THEIR RELATIONS AWAY FROM FRENCH, WHICH MEANS THAT CAMEROON WANTS MORE, AND MORE VARIED, RELATIONS WITH US - POLITICAL, COMMERCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE IS NO WISH TO OFFEND THE STILL PREDOMINANT FRENCH.

6. THUS, BENEFITS OF A VISIT FROM YOU WOULD INCLUDE:

- A VISIBLE REWARD FOR RESPONSIBLE, SERIOUS STATESMANSHIP;
- A DEMONSTRATION THAT THE US HAS CLOSE RELATIONS WITH OTHERS THAN AFRICAN "GIANTS" LIKE NIGERIA AND ZAIRE, ANCIENT RULERS LIKE KENYATTA, CONSTANT CRITICS LIKE NYERERE OR OCCASIONAL ONES LIKE KAUNDA;
- EVIDENCE THAT THE US ALSO ACTS ON BASIS OF ISSUE-SPECIFICITY, AS WE ASK OTHERS TO DO;
- INDIRECT BENEFITS BY WAY OF AHIDJO'S CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONS WITH HEADS OF STATE OF MAURITANIA, IVORY COAST, AND SENEGAL, WHO WOULD BE FULLY INFORMED ON CONVERSATIONS, AND WHOSE COUNTRIES HAVE NOT BEEN MENTIONED IN REPORTS ABOUT PROJECTED ITINERARY.

COSTS OF THE TRIP WOULD BE CONFINED TO THE TIME IT MIGHT TAKE AWAY FROM OTHER POSSIBLE STOPS. IF THE TRIP IS LIMITED TO THE COUNTRIES MENTIONED ABOVE IN THIS PARA, MORE STABLE, SERIOUS, AND RESPONSIBLE AFRICANS WILL WONDER WHY NONE OF THEM IS INCLUDED. CAMEROON'S AHIDJO IS THEIR IDEAL REPRESENTATIVE. GURC ALSO PUTS ON WELL MANAGED, DIGNIFIED RECEPTIONS FOR DISTINGUISHED VISITORS, AS SHOWN DURING RECENT ASSISTANT SECRETARIESOJ VISITS.

7. IF YOU ARE WILLING TO CONSIDER CAMEROON STOP, I WOULD BE GLAD TO FURNISH MORE DETAILED RATIONALE AND OPTIONS.
SPIRO

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